CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A hot swappable blade comprising:

a connector having a first pin/socket and a second pin/socket, the first pin/socket being longer than the second pin/socket;

the first and second pins/sockets being coupled to an input power terminal on the blade; and

a resistor connected between the first pin/socket and the input power terminal.

2. The blade defined by claim 1 wherein the blade includes a power converter which receives power from the input power terminal and provides power to the blade from an output power terminal located on the blade.

3. The blade defined by claim 2 wherein the power converter has an enable function for substantially disconnecting and connecting the input terminal and output terminals of the converter as the converter is disabled and enabled, respectively.

8. The blade defined by claim 7 including a second pin/socket equal in length to the first pin/socket and a third pin/socket having a second length, the second length being the longest length of the pins/sockets in the plurality of pins/sockets, the second and third pins/sockets being coupled to the input terminal of the power supply.

9. The blade defined by clam 8 including a resistor connected between the third pin packet and the input terminal of the power supply.

10. The blade defined by claim 9 wherein the power supply is a DC-to-DC converter.

11. The blade defined by claim 1 wherein the power supply is a DC-to-DC converter.

12. The blade defined by claim 10 including a plurality of data receiving pins/sockets having a length longer than the first length and shorter than the second length.

4. The blade defined by claim 3 wherein the enable function is controlled by a signal received by the blade on a third pin/socket having approximately the same length as the second pin/socket.

5. The blade defined by claim 4 wherein the connector includes a plurality of fourth pins/sockets for receiving data, the fourth pins/sockets having a length intermediate between the first and second pins/sockets.

6. The blade defined by claim 1 wherein the connector includes a plurality of data pins/sockets for receiving data, the data pins/sockets having a length intermediate between the first and second pins/sockets.

7. A hot swappable blade comprising:

a connector having a plurality of pins/sockets including a first pin/socket of a first length, the first length being the shortest length of the pins/sockets in the plurality of pins/sockets; and

a power supply having an enable function which interrupts the flow of power from a power supply input terminal and a power supply output terminal when the power supply is disabled by a signal applied to an enable terminal, the enable terminal being coupled to the first pin/socket.

13. A system comprising:

a backplane bus;

a plurality of blades each having a connector to engage the backplane including two management blades (MBs) and a plurality of other blades (OBs);

each connector having first length of a first length, second pins/sockets of a second length and third pins/sockets of a third length; the first length being the longest length, the third pins/sockets being the shortest length and the second length being longer than the third length and shorter than the first length;

the backplane bus having power lines which cooperatively engages one of the first pins/sockets and one of the third pins/sockets on each of the blades.

14. The system defined by claim 13 wherein data is communicated among the blades over the backplane bus through the second pins/sockets on each of the blades.

15. The system defined by claim 13 wherein each of the blades includes a resistor connected to the one of the first pins/sockets that receives power from the power line.

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16. The system defined by claim 15 wherein each of the OBs provides a signal indicating its presence in the backplane over one of the third pins/sockets.

17. The system defined by claim 16 wherein each of the OBs includes a DC-to-DC converter which is enabled by an enable signal received over one of the third pins/sockets from the backplane bus.

18. The system defined by claim 17 wherein the enable signals for the OBs originates from one of the MBs.

19. The system defined by claim 17 wherein each of the OBs provides a signal to at least one of the MBs indicating the status of its DC power.

20. The system defined by claim 13 wherein the system is a server.

21. The system defined by claim 19 wherein the system is a server.

22. The system defined by claim 21 including an additional bus connecting to the MBs.

23. The system defined by claim 22 wherein signals indicating the health of the MBs is communicated over the additional bus.

24. The system defined by claim 23 wherein the OBs include a plurality of central processing unit blades and a plurality switch blades.